

ON AN EEL FROM THE MARSHALL ISLANDS.

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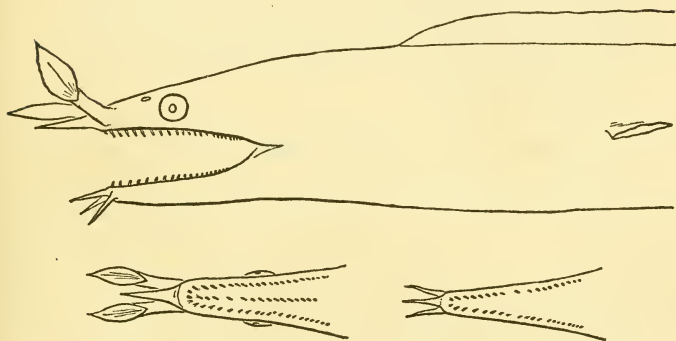
THE eel from which the accompanying sketches and description were drawn was sent to the Museum of Comparative Zoology in a collection, from the Marshall Islands, made by the Rev. B. G. Snow. As the balance of the lot was composed entirely of shoal-water species, the subject of this notice probably belongs to the same category. Its peculiarities, especially those of the rostrum, distinguish it from the other species of its genus (*Muraena*) to such an extent as will hardly permit its admission into any of the subgenera at present recognized. It is most closely allied to *Thyrsoidea*, but differs in snout and dentition.

A subgenus (*Rhinomuraena*) to contain it may be characterized by the nasal tubes, the rostral appendages, the uniserial teeth, and the elongate tail.

RHINOMURÆNA QUÆSITA, sp. n.

Form very slender, slightly compressed, tapering to snout and tail. Head small, elongate and narrow; snout pointed, ending in the acute extremity of a flexible prolongation. Mouth deeply cleft, interior surface closely sprinkled with small round papillæ; teeth slender, conical, acute, uniserial on jaws and palate, hooking backward,

anterior little larger, about twenty in each maxillary series, palatine series nearly as many as the others. Eye moderate, over the middle of the length of the mouth, little less than half as long as the snout, excluding the fleshy appendage. Posterior nostrils small, oval, not tubular, in front of the upper edge of the eye. Anterior nostrils at the end of the snout, tubular; each having the appearance of being split on its lower side for about half its length, thus forming in front of the tube a broad flap that termi-



nates in an acute point. At the symphysis on the lower jaw there is a sharp fleshy prolongation, similar to that on the the upper, but smaller, and a little below this, at each side of it, there is another extending forward and downward. Gill openings lateral, small, about twice the diameter of the eye, forming a longitudinal slit of which the anterior borders are prominent (a shape in part due to contraction). Pectorals absent; dorsal and anal well developed, continuous around the end of the tail. The dorsal begins in front of the middle of the distance from gill-opening to

mouth, becomes nearly as high as the body halfway to the end of the tail, and decreases in height forward and backward; the anal is of similar shape, but only half as high. Tail acuminate, tapering regularly from the base, twice as long as head and body.

Body, head, tail, and inside of mouth cavity black; upper half of dorsal yellow; lower margin of anal white; lower lip white, except at and near the symphysis.

Total length thirty-three inches, snout to vent eleven. Greatest depth of body about half an inch; depth of mouth near nine-sixteenths; length of head seven-eighths; and from snout to hinder edge of gill-opening two inches. Figures a little more than twice natural dimensions.

Hab. Ebon Island.

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